2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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modestly closed in front, and to prevent the dainty slipper, just covering her toes and no more, from slipping off the foot. However that may be, it is an accomplishment indispensable to a Burmese belle. She takes as much pains over it as she does with her jetty tresses. In a word, the nā-twin mingala transforms the girl into a woman, just as much as admission to a monastery makes the boy a man. It is her baptism, and is the distinctive mark of her race. Most of the men get their ears bored too, but the ceremony is not so solemn with them, and latterly is not so universal, at any rate not in the towns on the coast.

The ceremony takes place at the age of twelve or thirteen, just when the girl has attained puberty in fact. Her sadā is submitted to a soothsayer, that a fortunate day and hour may be chosen, and that being fixed, a great feast is prepared, and all the friends of the family and the relations are invited. An invitation to an ear-boring feast is a very urgent matter. No one can refuse without a very good excuse, and serious business is often postponed to the demands of such a ceremony. Everybody comes early, and sits down in any place he can find round about the front part and sides of the room, the girl, with all her female relatives about her, reclining on a mat at the back. The bedin sayā stalks about gazing at a mysterious strip of palm-leaf, or apparently wrapped in deep thought. Beside him is the professional ear-borer. He carries the needles, which are almost always pure gold, and even in the case of the poorest, never of any baser metal than silver. Rich people very often have them set at the ends with precious stones. At last the soothsayer gives the sign that the favourable moment has arrived. The ear-borer moves up immediately and passes the needles through the lobe of the ear, sometimes using a cork as they do in England, but more often letting them pass between two of his fingers. The girl, who has been worked up into a high state of excitement and terror by all the preparations, usually struggles and shrieks as hard as she can, but the women round about hold her down, and the band of music in the street outside strikes up a rapid movement and drowns her lamentations, while all the visitors burst into a flood of talk

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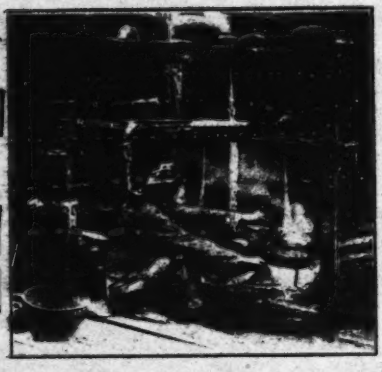

142. THE COOKING-PLACE.

of a tree of the dry zone, ground into a paste with water on a special stone. It is perfumed by grinding sandal-wood with it. The paste is smeared on the face and left to dry, after which the excess is rubbed off. For great occasions the paste is left on over-night. But ordinarily the face is "freshed" with water (*mye-hna-thit*) on rising in the morning. The Burmans admire white teeth and polish them with charcoal on a soft stick. The old style of women's hair-dress was like the early *chignon* fashion of about 1867 in Europe. The *sadôn* in this form is seen in Nos. 30, 381. About 1880 a new fashion was set by the palace, which now prevails. Tresses of false hair are much used by the women. Flowers in the hair and jewellery complete the toilet, which, like that of the actors in the *pwé*, is performed in view of everyone. The men's toilet consists in combing their long hair (No. 127). They take pride in the size of their top-knot (*yaung*) and rarely eke it out with false hair in the way the women do. The heavy knot works loose, so that combing and knotting up go on perpetually. The hair of both sexes is coarse and straight and jet black. Children's hair gets foxy from alternate exposure to rain and sun. The hair is smoothed with cocoanut oil and washed with soap-nut once or twice a month. At other times the Burmans are concerned to avoid wetting their hair. The native wooden combs are coarse, but the Chinese tooth comb is beginning to serve a useful purpose. Burmans turn grey at forty to fifty years of age and are white at sixty to seventy. Baldness is rare. Aged men still wear their little top-knot. The men's faces are smooth, many

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143. THE FAMILY MEAL (OLD STYLE).

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144. THE FAMILY MEAL (NEW STYLE).

having no trace of beard till thirty. The beard is sparse and is not shaved but plucked out with tweezers. (The *yakán* of Burma likewise use tweezers for the beard.) When there is a passable moustache, towards middle life, it is allowed to grow. The hair on a mole is cultivated—sometimes a single long hair—for luck. Besides the sandal-wood perfume just mentioned, there is the perfumed wood *kalamát*. Sandal-oil and attar of roses have long been imported from India. Scented waters are made from various flowers and an oil is obtained from *haddi-ngun*. Scents imported from Europe have become a regular toilet article. The shoulders and arms of those who habitually wear jackets and do not labour in the open are brunette; face and hands are darker, much like the complexion of the sun-browned Levantine, but of a yellower tint than his. Regular exposure browns the skin to a copper hue, and where exposure is severe to a brown-black, but not so opaque a black as that of India or Africa. The colour lightens again on avoidance of exposure. Women's and children's complexions are fairer; the new-born are no darker than in Europe. As a rule the Burman is darker and slenderer, with a more oval face; the Talaing fairer and more thick-set, with a broader face. The gloss of the skin helps to exaggerate the light and shade in photographs and make the complexion appear too dark. The ordinary stature of the men is from five feet three inches to five feet six inches, and of the women from four feet nine inches to five feet. The people are of a moderately spare habit.

145. BETEL (KUN).

Having made her evening toilet,